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Roadside Songs of Tuscany.

TRANSLATED AND ILLUSTRATED BY

FRANCESCA ALEXANDER,

AND EDITED BY

JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE,
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PART I.

THE STORY OF LUCIA.

*WITH AUTHOR'S AND EDITOR'S PREFACE,
AND TWO ILLUSTRATIONS*

(BEATRICE OF THE FIELD OF THE ALDER-TREES.
SANTA ZITA: THE MIRACLE AT THE WELL).

NEW YORK:

JOHN WILEY & SONS,

1884.

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BEATRICE.

Of the Field of the Alder-Trees.

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PART I.

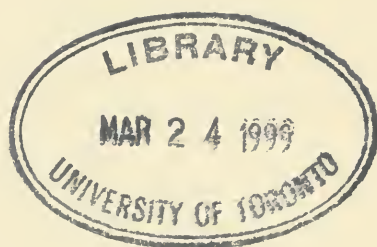
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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THESE songs and hymns of the poor people have been collected, little by little, in the course of a great many years which I have passed in constant intercourse with the Tuscan contadini. They are but the *siftings*, so to say, of hundreds and hundreds which I have heard and learnt, mostly from old people: many of them have never, so far as I know, been written down before, and others it would be impossible now to find. A great many were taught me by the celebrated improvisatrice, Beatrice Bernardi of Pian degli Ontani, whose portrait I have placed in the beginning of the book,—one of the most wonderful women whom I ever knew. This Beatrice was the daughter of a stonemason at Melo, a little village of not very easy access on the mountain side above Cutigliano; and her mother having died in Beatrice's infancy, she became, from early childhood, the companion and

assistant of her father, accompanying him to his winter labours in the Maremma, and, as she grew larger, helping him at his work by bringing him stones for the walls and bridges which he built, carrying them balanced on her head. *She had no education in the common sense of the word, never learning even the alphabet,** but she had a wonderful memory, and could sing or recite long pieces of poetry. As a girl, she used in summer to follow the sheep, with her distaff at her waist; and would fill up her hours of solitude by singing such ballads as "The war of St. Michael and the dragon! The creation of the world!! and the Fall of man!!!" or "The history of San Pellegrino, son of Romano, King of Scotland"; and now, in her old age, she knows nearly all the New Testament history, and much of the Old, in poetical form. She was very beautiful then, they say, with curling hair, and wonderful inspired looking eyes, and there must always have been a great charm in her voice and smile; so it is no great wonder that Matteo Bernardi, much older than herself, and owner of a fine farm at Pian degli Ontani, and of many cattle, chose rather to marry the shepherd girl who could sing so sweetly,

* Italics mine. Compare Fors on education, No. 94.

than another woman whom his family liked better, and who might perhaps have brought him more share of, worldly prosperity. On Beatrice's wedding day, according to the old custom of the country, one or two poets improvised verses suitable to the occasion, and as she listened to them, suddenly she felt in herself a new power, and began to sing the poetry which was then born in her mind, and having once begun, found it impossible to stop, and kept on singing a great while ; so that all were astonished, and her uncle, who was present, said, " Beatrice, you have deceived me ! If I had known what you were, I would have put you in a convent." From that time forth she was the great poetess of all that part of the country, and was sent for to sing and recite at weddings and other festivals for many miles around ; and perhaps she might have been happy ; but her husband's sister, Barbara, who lived in the house, and who had not approved of the marriage, tried very wickedly to set her brother against his wife, and to some extent succeeded. He tried to stop her singing, which seemed to him a sort of madness, and at times he treated her with great unkindness ; but sing she must, and sing she did, for it was what the Lord made her for ; and she lived

down all their dislike; her husband loved her in his old age; and Barbara, whom she nursed with motherly kindness through a long and distressing illness, was her friend before she died. Beatrice is still living, at a great age now, but still retaining much of her old beauty and brilliancy, and is waited on and cared for with much affection by a pretty grand-daughter bearing the same name as herself.

As for the other songs, I have explained in the notes which I have written under them all the little that I know about them. The tunes, with the exception of those which I found printed in the *Corona di Sacre Canzoni*, I learned from the poor people themselves, and wrote down as well as I could. Most of them (though they sound very sweet to me, bringing back the very feeling of the air in the fir-woods, or on the farms, where I have been used to hear them) are nothing more than plaintive monotonous little chants; but a few of the airs are very pretty; the accompaniments have been nearly all composed by Signora Sestilia Poggiali. The pictures sufficiently explain themselves; they are likenesses, nearly all, of the country people in their every day clothes and with their every day surround-

ings; while as to the ornamenting of the pages, it seemed natural that road-side songs should have borders of road-side flowers. Of the four long ballads, the "Madonna and the Gipsy," "St. Christopher," "Sta. Zita," and "The Samaritan," I have put in only one, the Samaritan, at full length, and of St. Christopher I have left out all the last half, which describes his preaching and his martyrdom, both because it was so very long, and because the details were so painful. Already the old songs are fast being forgotten; many of them it would be impossible now to find, and others are sung only by a few aged people who will soon be gone, or in some remote corners of the mountains; and in a few years they will probably be heard no more. They have served their time, and many people laugh at them now, and some have told me that I should have done better to spend my time and work on something more valuable; but in their day they have been a comfort to many. Labouring people have sung them at their work, and have felt their burdens lightened; they have brightened the long winter evenings of the poor women in lonely houses high among the mountains, when they have been sitting over their fires of fir-branches, with their children

about them, shut in by the snows outside, and with their men all away in the Maremma: and I have known those who have been helped to bear sickness and trouble, and even to meet death itself, with more courage, by verses of the simple old hymns. I have heard Beato Leonardo's "Hymn to the Cross" sung in chorus by a party of pilgrims, men and women together, going to the mountain of San Pellegrino on a still moonlight night in August, when it has sounded to me as sweet as anything that ever I heard. It seems to me that there are others who will collect and preserve the thoughts of the rich and great; but I have wished to make my book all of poor people's poetry, and who knows but it may contain a word of help or consolation for some poor soul yet? However that may be, I have done my best to save a little of what is passing away.

FRANCESCA ALEXANDER.

FLORENCE, PIAZZA SANTA MARIA NOVELLA,

December 25th, 1882.

THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

BRANTWOOD, *Jan. 1st*, 1884.

OF the circumstances under which this work came into my possession, account is given in my report to the St. George's Guild for the year 1883; it has been since a matter of much debate with me how to present it most serviceably to those whom it is calculated to serve; and what I am about to do with it, though the best I can think of, needs both explanation and apology at some length.

The book consists of 109 folio leaves, on every one of which there is a drawing, either of figures, or flowers, or both. To photograph all, would of course put the publication entirely out of the reach of people of moderate means; while to print at once the text of the songs and music, without the illustrations, would have deprived them of what to my mind is their *necessary* interpretation; they could not be in what is best of them

understood,—even a little understood,—without the pictures of the people who love them. I have determined therefore to photograph, for the present, twenty of the principal illustrations, and to print, together with them, so much of the text as immediately relates to their subjects, adding any further elucidation of them which may be in my own power. But as soon as I have got this principal part of the book well in course of issue, I will print separately all the music, and the little short songs called *Rispetti*, in their native Italian, and Francesca's English. Meantime, I have presented to Oxford the twelve principal drawings of those which will be published in photograph, and four others to the St. George's Museum at Sheffield. Twenty-five of the leaves of text, illustrated with flowers only, are placed at Oxford for temporary use and examination. These, as well as the greater part of the remainder of the volume, will be distributed between my schools at Oxford, Girton College at Cambridge, the St. George's Museum, and Whitelands College at Chelsea, as soon as I have prepared the text for publication, but this work of course necessitates for some time the stay of the drawings beside me.

They are admirably, in most cases, represented by

Mr. Hollyer's photographs : one or two only of the more highly finished ones necessarily become a little dark, and in places lose their clearness of line, but, as a whole, they are quite wonderful in fidelity and clearness of representation. Of the drawings themselves I will leave the reader to form his own estimate ; merely praying him to observe that Miss Alexander's attention is always fixed primarily on expression, and on the accessory circumstances which enforce it ; that in order to let the parts of the design on which its sentiment depends be naturally seen and easily felt, she does not allow any artifices of composition, or charms of light and shade, which would disturb the simplicity of her appeal to the feelings ; and that in this restriction, observed through many years, she has partly lost, herself, the sense of light and shade, and sees everything in local colour only : other faults there are, of which, however, be they in the reader's estimate few or many, he may be assured that none are of the least weight in comparison with the virtues of the work ; and farther, that they ought to be all to him inoffensive faults, because they are not caused either by affectation, indolence, or egoism. All fatal faults in art that might have been otherwise good,

arise from one or other of these three things,—either from the pretence to feel what we do not,—the indolence in exercises necessary to obtain the power of expressing the truth,—or the presumptuous insistence upon, and indulgence in, our own powers and delights, because they are ours, and with no care or wish that they should be useful to other people, so only they be admired by them. From all these sources of guilty error Miss Alexander's work is absolutely free. It is sincere and true as the sunshine ; industrious, with an energy as steady as that by which a plant grows in spring ; modest and unselfish, as ever was good servant's work for a beloved Master.

In its relation to former religious art of the same faithfulness, it is distinguished by the faculty and habit of realization which belongs to all Pre-Raphaelism, whether English or American ; that is to say, it represents any imagined event as far as possible in the way it must have happened, and as it looked, when happening, to people who did not then know its Divine import ; but with this further distinction from our English school of Pre-Raphaelism, that Miss Alexander represents everything as it would have happened in Tuscany to Tuscan peasants, while our Eng-

lish Pre-Raphaelites never had the boldness to conceive Christ or His mother as they would have looked, with English faces, camping on Hampstead Heath, or confused among a crowd in the Strand: and therefore, never brought the vision of them close home to the living English heart, as Francesca is able to show the face of her Lord to the hill peasants at the well of l'Abetone.* The London artists may answer with justice, that the actual life of l'Abetone is like that of Palestine; but that London life is not: to whom it may be again answered, and finally, that they have no business whatever to live in London, and that no noble art will ever be there possible. But Francesca's method of using the materials round her, be it noted, is also wholly different from theirs. They, either for convenience, fancy, or feelings' sake, use, for their types of saint or heroine, the model who happens that day to be disengaged, or the person in whom they themselves take an admiring or affectionate interest. The first heard organ-grinder of the morning, hastily silenced, is hired for St. Jerome, and St. Catherine

* Christ and the Woman of Samaria (at Oxford). See close of the notice of Lucia, at p. 22 below.

or the Madonna represented by the pretty acquaintance, or the amiable wife. But Francesca, knowing the histories, and versed in the ways of the people round her for many a year, chooses for the type of every personage in her imagined picture, some one whose circumstances and habitual tone of mind are actually like those related and described in the legend to be illustrated. The servant saint, Zita of Lucca, is represented by a perfectly dutiful and happy farm-servant, who has in reality worked all her life without wages; and the gipsy who receives the forlorn Madonna in Egypt, is drawn from a woman of gipsy blood who actually *did* receive a wounded boy, supposed to be at the point of death, into her house, when all the other women in the village held back; and nursed him, and healed him.

Perceiving this to be Miss Alexander's constant method of design, and that, therefore, the historic candour of the drawings was not less than their religious fervour, I asked her to furnish me, for what use I might be able to make of them, with such particulars as she knew, or might with little pains remember, of the real lives and characters of the peasants whom she had taken for her principal models. The request was fortunate; since in

a very few weeks after it had been presented, Miss Alexander sent me a little white book stamped with the red Florentine lily, containing, in the prettiest conceivable manuscript, a series of biographical sketches, which are to me, in some ways, more valuable than the book which they illustrate ; or rather, form now an essential part of, without which many of its highest qualities and gravest lessons must have remained unacknowledged and unaccepted.

I take upon myself therefore, unhesitatingly, what blame the reader may think my due, for communicating to him the substance of these letters, without reserve. I print them, in Francesca's own colloquial, or frankly epistolary, terms, as the best interpretation of the legends revived for us by her, in these breathing images of existent human souls.

Of the literary value of the songs themselves, it is not necessary for me to express any opinion, since Miss Alexander claims for them only the interest of having been practically useful to the persons for whom they were composed ; and, in her translation, aims only at rendering their meaning clear with a pleasant musical order and propriety of cadence.

But it is a point deserving of some attentive notice,

that this extremely simple and unexcited manner of verse, common to both the ballads and their translations, results primarily from the songs being intended for, and received as, the relation of actual facts necessary to be truly known; and not at all as the expression of sentiment, fancy, or imagination.

And they correspond in this function, and in their resultant manner, very closely to early Greek ballad in the lays of Orpheus and Hesiod,—and indeed to Greek epic verse altogether, in that such song is only concerned with the visible works and days of gods and men; and will neither stoop, nor pause, to take colour from the singer's personal feelings. I received a new lesson myself only a day or two since respecting the character of that early Greek verse, from a book I was re-reading after twelve years keeping it by me to re-read,—Emile Boutmy's '*Philosophie de l'Architecture en Grèce*,'—in which (p. 121) is this notable sentence. "*L'un des traits les plus frappants de la phrase homérique, c'est que l'omission et le sous-entendu y sont sans exemple. Je ne crois pas qu'on puisse signaler dans l'Iliade ou dans l'Odyssée une ellipse, ou une enthymème.*" But the difference between explicit and undisturbed narrative or statement of emotion, in this kind, and the continual hinting, suggesting, mystifying, and magni-

fyng, of recent pathetic poetry, (and I believe also of Gothic as opposed to Greek or pure Latin poetry,) requires more thought, and above all, more illustration, than I have time at present to give; and I am content to leave the verses preserved in this book to please whom they may please, without insisting upon any reasons why they should; and for myself, satisfied in my often reiterated law of right work, that it is the expression of true pleasure in right things—and thankful that, much though I love my Byron, the lives of Saints may be made vivid enough to me by less vigorous verses than are necessary to adorn the biography of Corsairs and Giaours.

SANTA ZITA : THE MIRACLE AT THE WELL.

A pilgrim poor to Zita came one day,
All faint and thirsty with the summer heat,
And for a little water did her pray—
'Twas close beside the well they chanced to meet—
She feared to give it, yet what could she say?
She answered humbly, and with words discreet :
“I wish, my brother, I could give thee wine,
But if the water please thee, that is thine.”

This said, she drew some water from the well,
And with a cross the pitcher did she sign,
“Oh, Lord,” she said, while low her sweet voice fell,
“Let not this water hurt him, he is Thine.”
The pilgrim, as he stooped to drink, could tell
Her thought before she spoke, I wish 'twere wine.
He tasted, then astonished raised his head,
“But truly, this is precious wine,” he said.

Accostandosi a Zita un pellegrino
Che per il caldo lui gran sete aveva,
Ognun di loro al pozzo era vicino,
E Zita che dell' acqua ne traeva,
Chiedendole da ber quel poverino,
Ed umilmente Zita rispondeva,
Aspetta, fratel mio, la vo a cavare
Perchè del vino non ti posso dare.

Volgendo Zita l'orazione a Dio
Fè sopra l'acqua il segno della Croce;
Che fosse vino avrei molto desio,
Disse, bevete, a lui con bassa voce.
Orando Zita disse—Signor mio,
Fate quest' acqua al povero non nuoce !
Così cominciò a ber quel pellegrino :
Gustando disse, È prezioso vino.



A pilgrim poor: lo Zita came one day,
All faint and thirsty with the summer heat,
And for a little water hid her pray.
T'was close beside the well they chanced to meet.
She feared to give it, yet what could she say?
She answered humbly, and with words discreet:
I wish, my brother, I could give thee wine,
But if the water please thee, that is thine.

This said she drew some water from the well,
And with a cross the pitcher hid she sign.
Oh Lord, she said, while lo! her sweet voice fell,
Not rot this water hurt him, he is thine.
The pilgrim, as he stooped to drink, could tell
Her thought before she spoke, I wish t' were wine
He tasted, then astonished raised his head:
But truly, this is precious wine I he said.



Accostandosi a Zita un pellegrino,
Che per il caldo lui quivi s'era crollato.
Ognun li levò le palle e via via.
E Zita che dell'acqua non trovava.
Chiedendole la beveranda porzione.
Ed umilmente Zita rispondeva
Aspetta fratello mio, la vè a cavare,
Perchè del vino non ti posso dare.

Volgendo Zita l'orazione a Dio
E sopra l'acqua il segno della Croce:
Che forse vino avrà nelle fosse.
Disse borge, a lui con tanta voce.
Quando Zita disse, Signor mio,
Ma che quest'acqua al polso non ruota!
Così cominciò a ber quel pellegrino:
Gustando vino, e prezioso vino!

SANTA ZITA.

The Miracle at the Well.

ROADSIDE SONGS OF TUSCANY.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE STORY OF LUCIA.

IN reading the legends of the saints, the reader who cares for the truth that remains in them must always observe first, whether the saint is only a symbolic one, like St. Sophia and St. Catherine; or a real one, like St. Genevieve and St. Benedict. In the second place, if they are real people, he must observe whether the miracles are done *by* them, or *for* them. Legends of consciously active miracles are rare: the modesty of the great saints prevents them from attempting such, and all the loveliest and best witnessed stories are of miracles done for them or through their ministry, often without their knowledge,—like the shining of Moses' face, or the robing of St. Martin by the angels ('Bible of Amiens,' chap. i.).

Now Santa Zita, "St. Maid," was a real, living, hard-worked maid-servant, in the town you still know as a

great oil mart, in the 13th century. As real a person as your own kitchen-maid, and not a bit better, probably, than yours is, if she's a good one;—only, living in the most vital and powerful days of Christianity, she was made to feel and know many things which your kitchen-maid can never feel, nor even hear of; and therefore, having also extremely fine intellect as well as heart, she became a very notable creature indeed, and one of wide practical power throughout Europe; for though she lived and died a servant of all work at a clothier's,—thirty years after her death, Dante acknowledges her the patron saint of her city: and she has ever since been the type of perfectness in servant life, to the Christian world.

More of her—indeed, all that is truly known of her—you shall hear in the next number of this book: I have here only to observe to you, that this, her principal active miracle during life, done at the well, is done unconsciously, and by her customary and natural prayer,—answered only, this time, in an unexpected manner.

Of such prayer, and its possible answer, we will think further after reading all her legendary history: but in the meantime, you must hear the quite plain and indisputable story of the girl who is drawn to represent her in Francesca's picture: which Francesca herself tells us, as follows:—

We come now to Sta. Zita, of whom the original

is Lucia Santi, a young married woman of "Le Motte," a place so named on account of the frequent landslides which take place in the neighbourhood. I always wonder why any one ever built the house in which she lives, which is in the very bed of a rocky stream, at the bottom of a ravine so narrow that one often does not see the house at all until he finds himself on the edge of the precipice, looking down on the roof of grey slate which covers the whole irregular group of buildings, on the threshing-floor, the haystacks, and, what there is hardly any need to mention, the cherry trees. It was not built there for want of any other place, for the Santi family are rich contadini, and own quite a large extent of beautiful hilly country. Lucia, as her picture shows, is more very sweet looking than very pretty. Though she *is* pretty, too, with her bright black eyes, always ready to brighten into a smile, and her dimples, and her shining white teeth, which look all the whiter contrasted with her brown skin. She lives on the Modenese side of the confine, (for I ought to have said before that l'Abetone is just on the border where the two states join,) so the people on the Tuscan side call her "Lombarda," and regard her with no very friendly eyes. It is strange what a mortal dislike there is between the Tuscans on the confine, and their Modenese, or, as they call them, *Lombard* neighbours.

People living not a mile apart speak of each other as foreigners, and the stories that each nationality tells about the other are enough to frighten one. I remember at one time there was a priest at the Abetone church who came from Fiumalbo, five miles off, and he seemed to be a very good man; but when I tried to induce an Abetone girl to go to his church, and hear him explain the gospel, as he was in the habit of doing on Sunday morning, she replied, in a tone of mingled contempt and bitterness, that she could not see the use of going to church to hear "*that Lombard!*"

But the mountain people have a great faculty of glorifying their own particular little corners, however small, and despising the rest of the world. What the Italians call the *patriotism of the campanile*. I remember once when Pellegrino Seghi, the singer, brought us a present of a fine trout which he had caught in the Lima, he gave it to me with the remark that we should find it *quite different* from the trout of the Sestaione. Though what the difference consisted in, or why there should be any rivalry between the inhabitants of two beautiful valleys four miles apart, I could never understand.

But to return to Lucia; she is married to the second son of old Santi, the rich contadino; and she and her husband, and the other son and his wife, and the two

children, live with the old people. The father, of course, is absolute master, and I am afraid sometimes he is rather a hard master to poor Lucia. She is a gentle, willing creature, but not very large or strong, and they literally "load and drive her" in a way that I should think cruel towards any beast of burden. It is enough to try any one's patience to see that poor Lucia walking down the steep road to the mill, two miles away, bent almost double under the weight of an immense sack of grain, stopping now and then to sit down and rest on a stone by the road-side, and when she has recovered her breath, creeping laboriously on again; and I do think sometimes that her father-in-law might let her take the mule; but he never thinks of it, and really, I do not think she ever thinks of it either. Long before daylight she must be about the farm work; sometimes as early as three o'clock, when there is mowing or reaping to be done. For all this she receives a poor living, and nothing else; she is simply an unpaid, overworked farm servant. She dresses in the coarse cloth which she and the other two women spin and weave from the wool of their own sheep. I must say that they have a wonderful taste in the making up and trimming of pretty fanciful aprons, which they weave with bright stripes of all sorts of colours, and make curious little pockets in. And the linen is bought of other contadini, who

raise and spin flax, and exchange it for the wool of Le Motte. So Lucia is clothed without spending money. Her head-dress, the only thing wanting, is supplied in a curious way. Once every two years a man travels through those mountains, buying up the hair of the women and girls. Lucia has beautiful coal-black hair, as fine as silk, and she sells it to him for a cotton handkerchief, worth (possibly) a franc! He probably sells that hair for thirty or forty francs. I told her that I thought she made a bad bargain, and she answered with her usual bright smile, "I can go to church without my hair, but I cannot go without my handkerchief." She is exceedingly fond of hearing songs or stories, and took a particular fancy to the ballad of the Samaritan woman, which I used to sing to her. The story of how our Lord met that woman when she went to the well for water took a great hold of her imagination, because she was in the habit of going to the well every day herself. About that time a pedlar came along who sold little books and coarse lithographs of sacred subjects, and we bought a good many and gave them to the neighbours. Lucia could not read, so the books were of no use to her, but we gave her her choice of the lithographs, and she chose a head of our Lord. When it was in her hands, she kissed it many times over with great devotion, and then

said to me, her eyes shining very brightly, as they always did when any very bright thought came into her mind,—

“I wish He would meet me some day; I know what I would say to Him!”

“What would you say to Him?” I asked her; and she, much excited, and apparently thinking such a meeting by no means improbable, answered,—

“I would ask Him to take me with him.”

“But,” I said, “would you not be sorry to leave the baby?”

“Perhaps,” she answered, “He would let me take the baby too.”

I asked her then if she would not be sorry to leave her husband; and she grew more sober, and thought about it for a minute: then she said,—

“I *should* be a little sorry to leave him, but he is a young man, and would soon find another wife. If he were an old man, then it would be different, and I would not leave him. But I should so like to go away with the Lord Jesus!”

“And is this all of the first story?”

This is all; and I am no less sorry than you there is no more:—yet, here, short and uneventful as it is, you

have the record of a whole life, and of its love, such love as was allowed to it. Is the reader shocked at Lucia's readiness to leave her husband, if only he did not miss her too much, for another Love? Have we here the proved mischief of religious enthusiasm, thinks he, making us despise our earthly duties?

Not so; look on it with what Protestant and practical mind you may. Lucia's 'desire to depart and be with Christ' is in no wise enthusiastic,—nay, in this vivid phase it is only momentary, and a new idea to her,—the consequence of Francesca's singing the Ballad of the Samaritana, and of the happy possession of the gay lithograph. It had not been in the least a part of her life, before,—no manner of discontent nor desire had defiled that life—or exalted. Her mind, so far as I can read it, is, in its nobleness of submission, like that of a graceful and loyal animal of burden. I have just been teaching the children at our village school, Bloomfield's verses about his 'Bayard.'

Ready, as birds to meet the morn,
Were all his efforts at the plough;
Then, the millbrook, with hay or corn,
Good creature, how he'd spatter through!

I left him in the shafts behind,
His fellows all unhooked and gone;
He neighed, and deemed the thing unkind,
Then, starting, drew the load alone.

And compare my own notes on the Serf horse of the railway station.* Like minded, in many respects, is poor Lucia,—and, in such likeness, far more to be revered than pitied.

Neither, in the slight hold which her heart takes of her domestic state, is she to be thought of with blame. Do not think, refined lady-love of happy husband, that she is incapable of happiness like yours; neither think *you*, passionate lady-love of poet lover, that she is incapable of your yearning, or distress. But—first of all things—she has been taught alike to forget herself, and subdue herself; she is a part of the, often cruel, always mysterious, order of the Universe; resigned to it without a murmur—without a reproach—without a prayer—except that her strength may be as her day: an absolutely dutiful, absolutely innocent, unflinchingly brave and useful creature;—while you, most of you, my lady friends, are flirting and pouting and mewing—as if the entire world had been made for you, and, by you, only to be pouted at, played with, or despised. I heard of a rich and well educated girl, but the other day, sick, no one of her people guessed why,—nor she neither, poor girl; but she was falling into a dangerous and fixed melancholy, simply for want of something to do. To have embroidered a handkerchief for Lucia, and sent it

* I forget where; but will give reference in next number, having a word or two more to say about it, here irrelevant.

to her, for once, without cutting her hair off in exchange, would have been singularly medicinal to the invalid.

For the rest,—Lucia is really a great deal prettier than she looks at the well-side; for Francesca had to bring her down to Santa Zita's level in that particular, and there is no record that Santa Zita was the least pretty, or had any distinction whatever above other girls except her perfect usefulness and peace of heart.

